



Villagers seek halt on illegal road construction

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**ITANAGAR, 21 Apr:**

Claiming that illegal earth-cutting and unauthorised road construction is still being carried out in the sensitive catchment areas from Ganga to Taipu and from Ganga to Tago, Papum Pare despite repeated pleas to the authorities concerned to stop it, the Village Forest Committee of Ganga-Chimi Panchayat on Monday demanded immediate halt on the illegal road

construction work from Chimi village to Taipu and from Ganga Village to Tago, and initiating strict legal action against those involved in violation of forest laws.

In a release, the committee said, "Such rampant and illegal activity poses a severe threat to the ecological balance and long-term sustainability of the forest and its wildlife. This illegal activity has not only damaged the forest but also contaminated the natural water sources. Villagers are now forced to drink muddy and unsafe water, posing serious health hazards to the community."

The Village Forest Committee said that it had on 10 April submitted a complaint to the principal chief conservator of forests, who responded promptly by directing the range forest officer to stop the illegal activities and seize the heavy machinery involved.

"However, it was shocking to learn that on the same night, around 10:40 pm, the machinery was suspiciously evacuated from the site before any official investigation could begin. This incident raises serious concerns about a possible information leak or collusion by vested interests. Despite repeated efforts, both official and personal, to urge the RFO of Poma division wildlife sanctuary to act against the culprits, no effective action has been taken so far. The RFO has also failed to respond to multiple calls made by our committee members. Meanwhile, reliable sources confirm that heavy machinery is still being used in the Tago area in violation of the forest regulations," the Village Forest Committee claimed.

It further informed that it also submitted a representation to the governor on 14 April in this regard.